

DARIEN SOCIAL SERVICES COMMISSION

Minutes of Meeting of January 13, 2012

Present: Olive Hauser, Debra Hertz, Holly Hawes, Melisse Reardon, Nancy Herling, Jennifer Geddes, Eta Adams, Ali Ramsteck, Polly Lowman, Beverly Kelsey,

Guest: Diane Barston.

Minutes: Minutes of the Meeting of November 18 were approved as presented.

Agenda Items Covered:

1. Attending Guest:

Diane Barston was welcomed as an observer of our meeting.

2. Introduction of Ali Ramsteck:

Ali was introduced as our new case manager, replacing Mary Bernat.

3. Review of Quarterly Report for October – December, 2011:

Olive reviewed the Quarterly Report, highlighting the following areas:

Administration: EAP requests for assistance are running ahead of last year with oil and propane client grants running about 50% less than last year. Senior housing and other electric users are experiencing about 75 % less in support from last year.

Holiday Season: Holiday programs were a success with approximately the same number of clients served. The new "Giving Tree" program was a success. It generated both gifts and awareness that there are residents who need assistance.

Household Goods Closet: Continues to be a success.

Taxi Voucher Program: Sales are lower than 2010; while we are advertising more, and the program is being promoted by both the Senior Center and Aging in Place. We will evaluate this program to determine whether to continue it.

Case Management: While the number of people served in the past quarter were not significantly higher than previous periods, the number of services offered to individual clients is greater, increasing the time spent on each client.

4. Review of the Budget:

Melisse Reardon and Olive met with Karl Kilduff and presented our budget request for 2012. It included 4 ½ more hours for Ali's position and a new line item covering the holiday program.

5. Class action suit filed against DSS:

Olive advised that a class action suit had been filed at the state level against DSS with regard to the delay in processing applications for Medicaid beyond the 45 days maximum required by law.

6. CL&P suing customers on medical protection from shut-off:

CL&P is suing customers who once qualified for medical protection from shut-off in an attempt to write off bad credit.

7. Update on Shuffle:

The Board of Education is expected to relocate to the Leroy property in a year; with the Senior Center relocation to Town Hall expected in two years.

A not for profit group is looking into the possibility of building 20 cottages for moderate income seniors. The units will be resident owed.

8. Update on the Allen O'Neil project:

Many of the existing tenants have been asked to move by March when phase 1 of the project begins. The entire project will double the number of units and take about two years to complete.

The Housing Authority is holding regular meetings; it was suggested that members of the DSSC try to attend: Polly Lowman, Beverly Kelsey, and Nancy Herling volunteered to cover their meetings.

9. Update on Project Lifesaver:

It appears that the technology is more expensive than originally thought; Stamford and New Canaan have instituted it, and we will continue to discuss it with the police.

10. Other Business:

Olive reported that the Federal Social Security office based in Norwalk may close which would have a negative impact on our clients

Aging in Place is taking over the Friendly Visitor program and is seeking volunteers.

Respectfully Submitted:

Beverly Kelsey

